

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
REMARKS AT SERVICES FOR PARATROOPERS KILLED (AS QUOTED IN THE MEDIA)  
FORT POPE, NC  
MARCH 29, 1994

CNN-TV, "THE WORLD TODAY"

JUDY WOODRUFF: Hundreds of soldiers and civilians attended an emotional memorial service at Fort Bragg today for the 23 soldiers who died last week in a fiery plane crash in North Carolina. They died six days ago at neighboring Pope Air Force Base after a chain-reaction crash. Today the victims were praised as the very best the nation has to offer.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEROME HABEREK [Division Chaplain]: Almighty Father, Eternal God, hear our prayers for your sons, whom you have called from this life to Yourself. Grant them light, happiness and peace.

SINGERS: Did you ever know that you're my hero?

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM M. STEELE [Commander, 82nd Airborne Division]: Our fallen troopers number 23. You honor each of them by your presence here this morning. They died in service to their country, all as a result of the terrible tragedy that we had at Pope Air Force Base last Wednesday, the 23rd of March.

Our present focuses on this terrible tragedy, and our future is represented in the lives of those who have survived: paratroopers, family members, and especially the children of our fallen soldiers.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM PERRY: The soldiers whom we honor today are in our thoughts and our prayers. We remember their courage, their devotion to duty and their commitment to their country.

SINGERS: A grateful nation bows its head in sorrow.

[Reading of names of those who died]